

HAREFIELD INFANT AND HAREFIELD JUNIOR SCHOOLS' GOVERNING BODY MEETING

Thursday 22nd November 2012, 7.15pm, Harefield Junior School

Chair:	Mr B Evans
Headteacher, Infant School:	Mrs B Lloyd
Headteacher, Junior School:	Mr P Dodd

Governors Present:

Ms S Atherton	Mrs L Boden	Mr P Dodd	Mr B Evans
Mrs C Evans	Mrs A Gibson	Mrs S Hooson-Jones	Ms C Keating
Mrs B Lloyd	Mrs J Moss	Mrs R Scott	Mrs S Soanes
Mr J Swan			

Clerk: Mrs A Edwards

The meeting opened at 7.15pm.

		Action
1.	<p><u>Welcome & Introductions</u></p> <p>Mr Evans welcomed back Mr Chapman who is planning to rejoin the Governing Body as an LA Governor and introduced Mr Stuart Henderson, the newly elected Infant Parent Governor. Both Mr Chapman and Mr Henderson were attending the meeting as observers whilst Mr Chapman's application is being processed and Mr Henderson's Governor induction is being arranged.</p> <p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>Apologies were received from Dr P Bassill, Mr D Lindsay, Dr N Patel, Miss R Penny and Mrs R Marks. Cllr H Higgins did not attend.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Declaration of Pecuniary Interests</u></p> <p>None other than previously recorded.</p>	
3./4.	<p><u>Minutes of FGB Meeting Held on 4th October 2012 – Matters Arising</u></p> <p><u>Item 6.</u> Mrs Edwards had circulated the updated list of Sub-committee membership and Governor Areas of Responsibility. No Governors had requested any changes to the lists. Action closed.</p> <p><u>Item 10.</u> Mr Dodd will be producing the Junior School Pupil Premium Report shortly. Action ongoing.</p> <p><u>Item 11.</u> Mr Dodd will contact Dr Bassill about the costings for t-shirts with</p>	<p></p> <p style="text-align: center;">PD</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PD</p>

	<p>embroidered logos. Action ongoing.</p> <p><u>Item 13.</u> Data Protection and CCTV Policies will be discussed under agenda item 13. Action closed.</p> <p><u>Item 14.</u> Governors have been invited to a Junior School Learning Walk on Friday 23rd November. Action closed.</p> <p><u>Item 18.</u> Unfortunately, the additional funds of £6k that Helen Bailey thought she could give to the Infant School for project work were actually not available. However, support will be available in other ways e.g. a coaching course. Action closed.</p>	
5.	<p><u>Sub-committee Reports</u></p> <p><u>SEN Sub-committee</u> Minutes from the SEN Sub-committee meeting had been circulated to Governors. There were no questions relating to the minutes.</p> <p><u>Curriculum Sub-committee</u> Minutes from the Curriculum Sub-committee meeting had been circulated to Governors. Mrs Evans highlighted that there are currently two vacancies representing the Infant School on the Sub-committee. There were no questions relating to the minutes.</p>	
6.	<p><u>Children’s Centre</u></p> <p>Ms Atherton informed Governors that she will be leaving her position as Children’s Centre Manager in mid January 2013 to concentrate on her independent social work. She has written a Succession Plan which she has sent to Mr Evans and Mrs Lloyd and has worked on a 2013/14 budget which takes into account a likely 5% reduction on this year’s budget. A number of staff have left the Children’s Centre recently including the Senior Child Care Worker who has gone on to work in the Infant School Nursery. The Centre is currently recruiting for a new Child Care Worker and there have been career development opportunities for existing members of staff.</p> <p>Mrs Soanes said she would be sorry to see Ms Atherton leave and Ms Atherton explained that it had not been an easy decision to make as she loves the Children’s Centre. She has had an amazing five years and is grateful for the opportunities she has had including the chance to work with such a great team, many of whom have been recruited from the local community therefore embedding the Centre in the community. Ms Atherton highlighted two groups that are going particularly well at the moment – the Young Parents Group (which had 12 parents and 16 children cooking last week) and an evening Childminders Support Group (which helps improve child care locally and their Ofsted results). Ms Atherton also highlighted a recent presentation given by the Deputy Centre Manager, Denise Allard, at the Local Safeguarding Board on behalf of Children’s Centres and people were</p>	

	<p>surprised at how much the Children’s Centre does. Mrs Allard will be stepping up as Acting Children’s Centre Manager. Mrs Scott added her thanks and congratulations on how the Centre has involved local people which in turn attracts local families. Mr Evans stated that these comments reflected the attitude of the whole Governing Body and thanked Ms Atherton saying he would be very sorry to see her go. He wished Mrs Allard all the best as well, particularly as Ms Atherton has set the bar so high. Mrs Lloyd felt that Ms Atherton had put her heart and soul into the Children’s Centre and that there would still be the capacity for her to be involved with the Centre in her new role.</p> <p>Mrs Evans asked whether the problem with water flooding the outside area of the Centre had been resolved and Ms Atherton confirmed that it had with the pumps making sure that any water that gathers dissipates quickly.</p> <p>Governors commented on the key aspect of the Children’s Centre being the beneficial effect on the children who are now moving through the Infants, and now after five years, into the Juniors. Mrs Lloyd added that it is already clear from tracking in the Foundation Stage that the Centre has made a difference and is extremely valuable.</p>	
7.	<p><u>Building Expansion</u></p> <p><u>Infant School</u></p> <p>Mrs Lloyd reported to Governors on the progress of the work. The extension to the Year 2 classroom is finished with new windows and a door and the additional three foot has made a real difference to the classroom. The Foundation Stage is due to be completed on Friday 23rd November and staff and parent helpers will be coming in on Saturday to set up the new Reception unit. All the building works will be completed by Christmas and have come in right on schedule.</p> <p>There are now only two classrooms in the school which have not been refurbished and the plan is to refurbish these over the next three years, probably starting initially with fitting carpet tiles which have made such a difference in the other classrooms, reducing the noise levels. All the new classrooms have been painted magnolia which is easy to touch up.</p> <p>Mrs Soanes said how impressed she was with the classrooms and the Reception staff and Mrs Moss in Year 2. Mrs Lloyd added that the one thing that visitors to the school have commented on is the effort that has been spent by staff on the temporary classrooms and that the children are all happy. When the unit opens next Monday the plan is to ask parents to come in and have a quick look around with their children. There are plans for an official opening, maybe with a ribbon being cut, in a few weeks time making it a special event.</p> <p><u>Junior School</u></p> <p>Mr Dodd reported to Governors on the progress of the work which had started at half term. The changes to the front entrance of the school are working well with no problems. A third of the playground has been cordoned off at the moment although</p>	

	<p>the children are currently able to use the entrance to the main toilets. Following a trial run, the children are coping fine with the reduced space in the playground although there is a bit more noise. Martin Gadd is meeting with the builders every day and so far everything is going well. The builders did discover a huge depth of concrete which was difficult to remove but they did manage this and have now made up the time lost because of this. The drilling and noise that can be heard in the classrooms is not ideal but unfortunately there is nothing that can be done about this and it does vary throughout the school day. There are photos showing the progress of the building work on the school website.</p>	
8.	<p><u>Finance</u></p> <p><u>Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS)</u></p> <p>Mr Evans reminded Governors about the new Schools Financial Value Standard (SFVS) which both schools are currently preparing for with a February 2013 deadline. There are 23 different areas that schools and their Governing Bodies must comply with and provide evidence for. Both schools are in a very good position having achieved the previous financial management standard (FMSIS) but there are a few areas that need to be tackled and Governors must be made aware of these and be aware of how the schools are financially managed. Mrs Edwards has been working with Mrs Godden and Mrs Williams to gather evidence relating to the Governing Body and Mr Evans asked her to highlight to Governors the areas which Governors still need to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the Governing Body Decision Planner needs to be reviewed - adequate levels of financial expertise including when specialist staff are absent - regular review of staffing structure - benchmarking - Whistle Blowing policy - business continuity or disaster recovery plan. <p>The Governing Body agreed that the majority of these areas could be discussed at the next Finance Sub-committee meeting and fed back to Governors at the next FGB meeting at the end of January.</p> <p>Mr Evans explained how a disaster recovery plan pervades everything, not just health & safety, and that financial rules expect an organisation to have a way of ensuring that it can continue with what it does. Mr Evans asked Mr Dodd and Mrs Lloyd to send him their plans so he can look at their structure and check to see whether there are any gaps. The plans can be brought to Governors at the January FGB meeting.</p> <p>Mrs Edwards advised Governors that she is preparing evidence folders and will be cross referencing evidence with the 23 areas of the SFVS.</p> <p><u>External Audit of Private School Funds</u></p> <p>Mr Evans signed off the External Audit of Private School Funds for both Harefield Infant School and Harefield Junior School. Mr Evans also signed off the Harefield Junior School Journey Fund.</p> <p><u>Best Value Statement</u></p> <p>The 2012-13 Best Value Statements for both Harefield Infant School and Harefield</p>	BE/ PD/ BL

	<p>Junior School were presented to the Governing Body and signed off by Mr Evans.</p> <p><u>Statement of Internal Control</u> The 2012 Statements of Internal Control for both Harefield Infant School and Harefield Junior School were presented to the Governing Body and signed off by Mr Evans.</p>	
9.	<p><u>The Changing Landscape of Education</u></p> <p>Mr Evans informed Governors that earlier in the term he had attended a Hillingdon Primary Forum meeting with Mr Dodd and Mrs Lloyd for a presentation on the “Changing Education Landscape” and how he felt that Governors should be aware of these changes and their strategic importance to schools. These changes include reduced funding for local authorities and services no longer being available centrally from the local authority which schools will be expected to buy into themselves. Mr Evans feels that the current political agenda seems to be to turn schools into academies with profit and non-profit making organisations taking over schools using different models.</p> <p>The Governing Body did have a brief look at its strategy a while ago but Mr Evans would like the Governing Body to now consider which direction would be the most appropriate to follow, looking at all the different information that is available relating to the way money is allocated and the impact of national budget deficits. He would like Governors to consider all the different options that might be available including federations, academies, co-operatives etc. Mr Evans circulated a detailed list of all the information that is available from the web for Governors to research as their first step. The Governing Body should meet and review this information, possibly inviting other schools to come in and talk about their experiences. Governors should then continue to reflect on the information they have been presented with and continue with their research. Finally, the Governing Body should meet to share information and start considering the Governing Body’s strategy with loose timescales.</p> <p>Governors discussed some of the things that they would have to consider.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The difference between primary education and a large secondary school and possible impacts on Nursery and Early Years. - The implications for Governing Bodies relating to pensions and pay. - Increased freedom but increased responsibility for Governing Bodies. - Well managed and sensitive consultation with staff and the parent body in decision making – supported by a clear strategy from the Governing Body. - Governing Bodies can consider becoming part of a co-operative family e.g. schools in Cornwall, even looking outside of their own local authority. - Horizontal grouping e.g. co-operatives compared to vertical grouping e.g. academies. - Option of keeping own identity. - The high profile of academies in the media bringing the discussion into the public domain. <p>Mr Evans suggested Governors consider which of the options available safeguard what is most important to the schools and stressed the importance of taking time to come to any decisions. He stressed that the Governing Body recognises that the</p>	

	<p>staff are the greatest asset in both schools. Early next year Mr Evans will arrange a meeting to take the discussion forward and in the meantime he urged Governors to start their research.</p>	BE
10.	<p><u>Junior School Improvement Plan</u></p> <p>Mr Dodd circulated the draft School Improvement Plan 2012-13 to Governors. He advised Governors that the school had held a School Improvement Day on 5th November which nearly all staff attended and some Governors. During the day everyone talked about the school, where it is and what needs to be done to move forward. The draft School Improvement Plan was presented to staff the following day. Mr Dodd highlighted the different aspects of the Plan to Governors.</p> <p><i>School Aims</i> Mrs Evans felt that one of the school aims - ‘For pupils to use language, ICT and mathematics effectively’ was quite limiting as it only identified three aspects. She will feedback her thoughts to Mr Dodd.</p> <p><i>Annual Objectives</i> Mr Dodd advised that these came out of group discussion and focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - achievement and continued improvement in writing ensuring links to the curriculum are strengthened. - upgrading the library making it more child friendly and redeveloping reading schemes. - problem solving activities. - ensuring staff are guided appropriately in order to achieve high good or outstanding in their teaching. Mr Dodd highlighted to Governors the fact that since the last Ofsted inspection there have been a lot of staff changes and that the majority of staff who were judged as outstanding in the last inspection have since left, including the Headteacher. <p><i>Leadership and Management</i> This focuses on a review of the staffing structure, training new leaders, developing a new model for school improvement and looking at Governor Mark.</p> <p><i>Behaviour and Health & Safety</i> This includes a review of the Behaviour Policy as well as ensuring that all aspects of the new building are managed safely.</p> <p>Mr Dodd explained that this is a very democratic document which has been considered by a lot of different people. It is also linked to the school budget. Mr Evans commented that it was an excellent document and Mr Dodd added that he had deliberately made the format quite short.</p> <p>Mrs Hooson-Jones commented on how well the two training days had gone with brilliant feedback from all those involved. Mrs Evans added that the School Improvement training day had been very good and that staff had really been watching each other and getting support from one another.</p>	CE
11.	<p><u>Attendance</u></p> <p>A draft Attendance Policy had been circulated to Governors prior to the FGB meeting. Mrs Lloyd and Mr Dodd had met to discuss attendance at both schools and would like to clamp down on parents taking children out of school for term-</p>	

	<p>time holidays. The borough’s Education Welfare Officer can support the schools by sending a letter out to parents on the first occasion they do this warning them that they will be fined if they take term-time holidays again. The letters would highlight the negative impact that holidays can have on a child’s education. This year has been unique with the Olympics taking place and some parents being told by their employers that they could not take holidays during that period e.g. the police. In fact the DfE did write to schools about this issue. The Attendance Policy would help the schools to manage the situation with parents. Mrs Gibson felt that parents have an expectation that holidays will be refused at secondary school but that they will be agreed in the Infants or Juniors, and that they even believe that they are allowed to take ten days holiday a year. Mr Dodd added that he felt parents are surprised at the high threshold of a 94% attendance level. Mrs Lloyd advised that last year’s Infant School reports included more detailed information about absence and that some parents were quite shocked at the percentages. Both schools want to keep the profile of attendance high and change the perception that when children are small poor attendance does not matter. Both schools reward good attendance with certificates, badges etc. Governors suggested removing ‘outings’ as a reward in bullet point five on page 1 of the policy. Governors approved the policy for both schools to use.</p>	
12.	<p><u>Headteacher’s Written Reports</u></p> <p>Following a suggestion to make their written reports more uniform, both Headteachers had produced their reports using a new format which Governors approved. Governors had no questions relating to the written reports.</p> <p><u>Infant School Mission Statement</u></p> <p>Mrs Lloyd presented the new Infant School Mission Statement to Governors which staff had developed during their recent training day. The Governing Body felt it was too long for one sentence and suggested splitting it up into two sentences with a small adjustment to make sure it is grammatically correct.</p> <p><u>Governor Questions</u></p> <p>Mrs Evans asked Mr Dodd whether he had removed the reference to annual leave from the Special Leave Policy? Mr Dodd confirmed that he would follow this up. The HR Co-operative’s guidance is that this policy should be applied to all staff at the discretion of the Headteacher but it is important that procedures are seen to be fair.</p> <p>Mr Evans asked Mrs Lloyd and Mr Dodd about future pupil numbers and what this means in terms of two or three form entry? Although the schools are expanding with the number of pupils increasing, class sizes should be economical in terms of staff ratios to children. Three form entry year groups from the Infants will be moving through to the Juniors but although these classes may be viable in the Infants, this may not be necessarily so in the Junior School. Mr Dodd stated that a school with spaces can be a challenge and gave the example of the need to merge a year 4 and year 5 class this year. Mixed vertical classes can be a challenge for the teacher, although this particular class is working well, but it does pose a problem if</p>	

	<p>more children wish to join the school in these year groups e.g. having another 10 children in this class would not work. In terms of the future, it is difficult to plan as this is the only school in the village and it is in a very unusual position where 90% of the children go on to the Harefield Academy. Mrs Lloyd explained that it is a slightly different scenario in the Infant School and advised that the local authority have recently admitted a child on the Fairer Access Panel which would take Reception over the 90 limit (to 91). However, the school would be expected to not go over 30 per class in year 1 next year which could result in vertical grouping. However, Reception has now been able to accommodate this additional admission and keep within the 90 limit as another child moved away so a space became available. The place was also offered to the parent by the local authority without consulting with the Infant School. Mrs Lloyd advised that there is an expectation by the local authority that the 30 class size pledge can be maintained through wastage e.g. children moving out of the area. Mrs Scott also raised the issue of out of borough children and statemented children wishing to join the schools as well which could create further problems.</p> <p>Mr Evans confirmed that there will be expansion in both schools with a reliable clue for numbers in Juniors being the class sizes in the Infants. He also suggested looking at birth rates for Harefield although birth rate predictions from the local authority are not very accurate. Ms Atherton added that Children’s Centre figures for the birth rate in Harefield are increasing but are not at the same level as other areas. Governors agreed that the important thing is how this is managed e.g. through vertical groups and the fact that there is no legal class size for junior classes meaning teaching capacity and the percentage of income related to staff can be considered with decisions to have two form entry or three form entry year groups.</p>	
13.	<p><u>Policy Update/Review</u></p> <p><u>Data Protection Policy</u> Mrs Evans had considered the model policy and sent comments to Mr Dodd and Mrs Lloyd. As they had not received her email she will email them again and once they have been taken her comments into account the policy will be presented to Governors at the next FGB meeting for approval.</p> <p><u>CCTV Policy</u> Mrs Scott had emailed a different model policy to Mr Dodd which she thought could quite easily be adapted for the Junior School. It could also be adapted for the Infant School. Mrs Scott confirmed that it is now a legal requirement to have this policy. Mrs Scott will resend the policy to Mr Dodd as well as send it to Mrs Lloyd and will work with them and Mr Gadd to make the appropriate adjustments. It can then be presented to Governors at the next FGB meeting for approval.</p>	<p>CE/ PD/BL</p> <p>RS/ PD/BL</p>
14.	<p><u>Governor School Visits</u></p> <p><u>Infant School</u> Arrangements have been made with Mrs Hooson-Jones and Mrs Soanes for them to visit the Children’s Centre in December.</p>	

	<p><u>Junior School</u> Mrs Evans has assisted with interviews for two recent appointments.</p> <p>Mr Evans, Mrs Evans, Mrs Scott and Mrs Soanes will be joining Mr Dodd for a Learning Walk to look at Behaviour on 23rd November 2012.</p> <p><u>Governor Training</u> Mr Evans attended the <u>Changing Landscape of Education Primary Forum</u> meeting earlier this term.</p> <p>Mr Dodd, Mrs Evans, Mrs Hooson-Jones, Mrs Marks, Miss Penny and Mrs Scott attended the <u>Junior School Improvement Plan Training Day</u> on 5th November 2012.</p> <p>Mrs Boden, Mrs Evans, Ms Keating, Mrs Lloyd, Mrs Moss, Mrs Scott and Mrs Soanes attended the <u>Infant School Development Plan and Mission Statement Training Day</u> on 6th November 2012.</p> <p>Mrs Boden and Mrs Lloyd attended <u>Investor in People</u> training in November 2012.</p> <p><u>Ofsted – Raising the Bar</u> Mrs Evans and Mrs Hooson-Jones suggested asking for an in-house ‘Ofsted – Raising the Bar’ training session from the Governor Support Service. Mrs Edwards has confirmed with Ron Fowler that this will be possible and will make the arrangements for this to be held next term. She will keep Governors informed.</p>	AE
15.	<p><u>Record of Notifiable Accidents</u></p> <p>Mrs Scott reported that there had been no notifiable accidents recorded in either the Infant School or Junior School to date this term.</p>	
16.	<p><u>Ratification of Policies/Documents</u></p> <p><u>Capability Procedure/Performance Appraisal for Teachers Handbook & Performance Management for Support Staff</u> These model documents produced by the HR Co-operative have recently been amended and were sent to Governors in advance of the FGB meeting. Governors felt that both they and staff should be given another opportunity to consider them and send Mr Dodd and Mrs Lloyd their comments. Governors felt that it was important to raise staff awareness of these documents and make sure that they understand that there are parts of the documents which are statutory and cannot therefore be changed. Providing there are no adverse comments, the Governing Body would be happy for these documents to be ratified at the January FGB meeting. Mr Evans added that support for the schools in staffing matters from the HR Cooperative ties in with these documents which have been agreed through the unions. Mrs Edwards will resend the documents to Governors.</p> <p><u>Whistle Blowing Policy</u> Both schools have had a Whistle Blowing Policy for many years which is taken</p>	PD/BL AE

	<p>from the model policy provided by the HR Co-operative. The policy is available to staff.</p> <p>The following Junior School documents had received annual updates and were ratified by the Governing Body being signed off by Mr Evans:- 2012 Finance Policy and Financial Working Practices 2011-12 Best Value Statement. Mr Evans also reviewed the updated list of signatories for cheque signing in the Junior School.</p>	
17.	<p><u>A.O.B</u></p> <p><u>Talk Boost</u> Unfortunately, the additional funds of £6k that Helen Bailey thought she could give to the school for project work were actually not available. However, Talk Boost training had already been set up to train a number of staff in intervention around language and this still went ahead very successfully. The Infant School is also going to link up with Yeading Infant School to continue this intervention work through Action Research.</p> <p><u>Thank you</u> Mrs Lorraine Williams will be retiring at Christmas and Mr Evans extended his thanks to her on behalf of the Governing Body for everything that she has done for the Governing Body and the school over the years. Mr Dodd added to this by commenting how much Mrs Williams has supported him since joining the Junior School. If any Governors wish to make a contribution to her leaving present they should contact a member of the Junior School office staff.</p> <p><u>Sub-committee Meetings</u> Mr Dodd asked the Chairs of the Sub-committees whether they would like to consider having Mrs Edwards minute these meetings on their behalf. However, the Chairs were happy to continue to minute the meetings for the time being.</p> <p><u>March FGB Meeting Date</u> The March FGB meeting date was moved from 14th March to 7th March 2013. Mrs Edwards will circulate the new date to Governors.</p> <p><u>Attendance at Governing Body Meetings</u> Mrs Edwards advised the Governing Body that there are currently two Parent Governors (Infants and Juniors) who have only attended three out of the last eight FGB meetings. She wondered whether Governors would like to consider asking them to stand down as they are obviously having trouble meeting their commitment to the Governing Body and there could be other parents interested in joining the Governing Body who could represent the parent body better. As a very close Parent Governor election has just been held in the Infant School, the parent who came second could be asked if they are still interested in joining the Governing Body. Mrs Edwards could organise nominations/election for a Junior Parent Governor. Governors agreed that the two Governors concerned should be</p>	<p>AE</p> <p>AE</p>

	<p>contacted and asked if they would consider standing down. If they do stand down, Mrs Edwards will then make arrangements to fill their vacancies.</p> <p><u>Parents Forum</u> Mrs Lloyd advised that the Infant School plans to set up a Parents Forum with two parent representatives from each year group. The plan is for comments and suggestions from the Parents Forum to feedback to Infant Parent Governors.</p>	
18.	<p><u>Date of the Next Meeting</u></p> <p>Thursday 31st January 2013, 7.15pm, Harefield Junior School.</p>	

Signature _____
(Chair of Governors)

Date _____